

March 8, 2002

Patent Application

Docket No. SPO-116

## IN THE UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE

Applicant(s) : Takashi Muramatsu, Kohji Okamoto, Shinya Ikematsu, Munehiro Oda,  
Hideshi Kumai, Sadatoshi Sakuma

Docket No. : SPO-116

For : Early Cancer Tumor Marker

PRELIMINARY AMENDMENT

Please amend the above-identified patent application as follows:

In the Specification

Please add the following paragraph at page 1, above line 5:

This application is a National Stage Application of International Application

A1  
Number PCT/JP00/06147, published, pursuant to PCT Article 21(2).

Please substitute the following paragraph at page 9, lines 15-25:

A2  
In another embodiment, MK can be used as a marker for certain types of cancers, such as hepatocellular carcinoma. Blood MK level rises with the advancement of the stage of hepatocellular carcinoma. For cancer diagnosis, the assay described above is performed multiple times sequentially, and the change in MK level is evaluated. For example, this assay is